

Message Text

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ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 NEA-07 EUR-08 PM-03
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/053 W

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R 231428Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2109
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 12511

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, EG, ET, FT, SA, SO
SUBJ: POSSIBLE ROLE FOR EGYPT IN TFAI

1. DURING CONVERSATION DEC 22 WITH EGYPTIAN AMB
BASSIOUNY, I ASKED HIM HOW HE SAW SITUATION DEVELOPING IN
TFAI. HE CONFIRMED THAT EGYPT HAS NOW OPENED CONSULATE
IN DJIBOUTI AND THEN IMPLIED RATHER STRONGLY THAT EGYPT
IS PLANNING TO TAKE AN ACTIVE ROLE IN BRINGING ABOUT
PEACEFUL TRANSITION OF TERRITORY TO INDEPENDENCE. HE
FURTHER IMPLIED THAT SOMALIA WAS GENERALLY AWARE OF THIS
INTENTION AND IN HIS JUDGEMENT WAS NOT OBJECTING, POSSIBLY
BECAUSE SOMALIA MAY UNDERSTAND THAT IF TFAI WAS TO HAVE
ANY ECONOMIC VIABILITY AFTER INDEPENDENCE, IT WOULD
REQUIRE CONSIDERABLE INFLUX OF ARAB CAPITAL (BASSIOUNY
MENTIONED IN PARTICULAR SAUDI ARABIA).

2. ASKED HOW HE THOUGHT ETHIOPIA MIGHT VIEW WHAT HE
SEEMED TO BE PICTURING AS STRONG ARAB PRESENCE IN
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POST-INDEPENDENCE TFAI, BASSIOUNY WAS CONSIDERABLY
LESS CERTAIN, BUT PERSONALLY SEEMED BE OF OPINION
THAT EPMG WOULD NOT POSE DIFFICULTIES.

3. COMMENT: BASSIOUNY IS OFTEN WELL INFORMED, BUT
MAY NOT ALWAYS PERFECTLY REFLECT CURRENT ATTITUDES OF

HIS GOVT. NONETHELESS, IF DEPT CONSIDERS IT
WORTHWHILE, THEY MAY WISH INQUIRE IN CAIRO WHETHER
EGYPT DOES INDEED PLAN ON ANY KIND OF ROLE IN TFAI
DURING PERIOD LEADING TO INDEPENDENCE. GIVEN
ETHIOPIAN CONCERN WITH ROLE OF ARAB STATES IN ERITREA,
BASSIOUNY WAS NO DOUBT QUITE RIGHT IN BEING CAUTIOUS
ABOUT EPMG RECEPTIVITY TO ANY STRONG ARAB ROLE IN TFAI,
ALTHOUGHT ETHIOPIA WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY PREFER INDEPENDENT
TFAI WITH STRONG ARAB INFLUENCE TO A TFAI UNDER INFLUENCE
OF OR EVEN SWALLOWED UP BY SOMALIA.
TIENKEN

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